3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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595 on the march, unless menstruating, when he carried it himself. In fact, however, plural wives tended to reduce the domestic drudgery of all through a sharing of labor.

A man with only two or three wives and not too many children kept them all in one tipi. An important man's wives ordinarily lived apart, however, each woman having her own tent for herself and her children. Among the poorer families when wives were sisters, they sometimes used only the one tipi and possibly one bed for a time, but they always constructed separate tipis as soon as possible.[20] The opening of these tents was on the main tipi which was occupied by the husband. Long buckskin strings, attached to the buffalo mattress of each woman, were laid under the fold of the tent into the tipi of the husband so that he could instantly summon any one of his wives.

163 Comanche women were not very prolific, and death of the mother
842 at childbirth was not uncommon.[21] The average birth rate seems
847 scarcely to have exceeded two children to each woman, and it was a rare case when there were more than three or four born to one woman. Births were far apart, and the newborn were usually small. Many women were barren. Contraceptives were unknown to the Comanches, but abortions were practiced by beating the belly with stones. Hard physical work and constant horseback riding also apparently induced abortions so early in pregnancy that they went unnoticed.

844 Giving birth to a child was ordinarily a simple affair. Cases have been reported of women on the trail dropping behind the group, giving birth to their children, and then after a few hours rejoining the group on the march.[22] Under normal conditions, however, natal preparations were made. If a woman had her own tipi, she might use it; but if it was used by other members of the family, a separate lodge was constructed. In the summer it would be of brush about eight feet in diameter and six or seven feet high. Inside the lodge the earth

[20] Informant: See How Deep the Water Is.

[21] R. N. Richardson, "The Culture of the Comanche Indians," Texas Archeological and Paleontological Society *Bulletin*, I (1929), 63.

[22] Burnet, "The Comanches and Other Tribes of Texas and the Policy to Be Pursued Respecting Them," *loc. cit.*, 234; Humfreville, *Twenty Years among Our Hostile Indians*, 182.

3:Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
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was made soft. Two pits were dug in the ground, one for the afterbirth and the other for heating water and steaming. One or more stakes about four feet long were driven into the ground by the bed for the patient to grasp as an aid in delivery. A supply of sage was brought in and hot coals were prepared. A medicine woman, middle-aged or older, was in attendance. One or more additional women were likely to be on hand to give assistance. No men came near. The woman normally lay on the bed, but when the pain seemed unbearable she walked around or squatted over the hole to grasp a stake. An attendant might try to aid nature by grasping the patient around the abdomen and exerting pressure. Hot rocks were placed against her back, and she was required to drink hot water or hot soup. 844

When births were prolonged and stubborn, a medicine man was called in to take over. We have accounts of the actions of two medicine men who were called in such cases; one had buffalo power; the other, otter. The husband of Holding Her Sunshade, when called, asked for a buffalo hide with the tail on it. He drew a white "path" down the center of it with his fingers and placed it as a door on the childbirth tipi. The mother and father also had to wear buffalo robes with tails and the hair on the outside. The doctor entered the tipi holding a buffalo tail. He waved the tail in the mother's face and then made a motion as if he were going to vomit. He was bringing up his power. Next he breathed his power into the patient's mouth and spit in the midwife's hands, had her rub them together and rub the patient's abdomen. His power was now on her and inside of her. His work was done, and he walked around the fire and out the door. "The child should be born when he puts his second foot outside the door. He was successful, and although the family was poor, they gave him their best horse." 845

The otter medicine man, known to Post Oak Jim, worked a little differently. He had a tabu against any other pregnant woman's being about. His method was to pull his otter skin through his teeth from left to right, after which he drew the skin down the front of the woman's body. He fanned down her whole body with an eagle feather. He then fanned her lightly above her head. A medicine song was sung, and he was ready to leave with a flying leap through the door. "When his feet hit the ground outside the tipi, the child will be born."

5: Carlson & Jones E, N-4, 5 (1933)1939
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824 bers of the genus Ilex, which were similarly used. The well-known
262 "black drink" of the Southeastern Indians was prepared from *Ilex*
272 *vomitoria*, *Ilex cassine*, and perhaps from other species. However, although four species of Ilex are listed for Oklahoma (23, pp. 299–300), their range is given as in the southeastern part of the state, and they perhaps do not occur near the Comanche reservation.

000 Hoebel's notes on the Shoshone (10) contain an interesting item to which we know no parallel. He records the use of a plant (Shoshone: *pɔ':int*ˢ) which is described as similar to the maidenhair fern (*Adiantum spp.*). The minute orange "seeds [sporangia?] in the leaves" were threshed by rubbing the leaves between the hands, and were then winnowed, ground, and boiled in water for soup.

824 A number of Comanche plant medicines were recorded, for a
278 rather wide variety of ailments. Most of these medicines seem to be in the nature of practical home remedies, and few have anything of magic or of ceremony about them. Chamberlain (6, p. 46) gives the Gosiute term for medicine as *na'-tsu*. It is interesting to note that a number of the Comanche names for important medicines have this ending.

The flowers of the sneezeweed (*Helenium microcephalum*) were
● [344] broken up and inhaled to induce sneezing as an aid in the expulsion of afterbirth. These flowers were similarly used in clearing the nasal passages. It seems likely that the plant would be effective for such purposes, as it secretes a resin which Stemen and Meyers (23, p. 599) say is poisonous to some people; it causes a skin condition similar to that produced by poison oak (poison ivy). This resin in contact with the nasal membranes would probably induce sneezing.

Two other plants were said to be employed in obstetrical cases.
[841] A tea made from the root of an unidentified plant (Comanche: *pchenatsu*) was drunk to check excessive menstrual discharge. The Arikara also use a root for this purpose, that of the mallow (*Malva coccinea*) triturated with the gum from the chokecherry and given as a drink (8, p. 74). After childbirth the Comanche woman was
[844] laid on a padding of plants of silvery wormwood (*Artemisia filifolia*) over hot coals. No explanation of this procedure was obtained; the plant was widely used, however, both medicinally and ceremonially, throughout the Plains region, and smoke from it was considered effective in purification.

10:Horn T-3 (1836-1837) 1955
NO6 Comanche NO6

in safety; that there is no cause for crying, and exhorts them to refrain; when, by mutual consent, they cease crying as easily as they commenced it, and go about their business. But if any of their friends have died in the fight, or otherwise, their grief appears deep and lasting. In this case, they immediately commence cutting and disfiguring themselves in a shocking manner, and with varied and unseemly gestures, accompanied with loud and tremendous yells, they seem to try to excel each other. They will ascend the loftiest peaks of the tallest mountains they can reach, and through the whole of the gloomiest night, send abroad through the surrounding forest their dismal wailings, in howls of horrid [59] accent. Nor are their signs of grief much less pungent when they lose their friends at home; but they hold all others enemies, and treat them accordingly, dead or alive. The reader has seen plenty of this in the preceding narrative; but I will here add, they fastened the scalps of our murdered friends to the bridles of their mules, so as to suspend them under the chin of the animals, and this was their constant practice while I was with them. When they encamped, they would fix them upon the top of long poles, and set them up by their tents, as I have seen flags upon garrisons, and elsewhere.

When a woman was to be confined, they removed the grass and everything else from the surface of the ground, and in a convenient place in the tent

10:Horn T-3 (1836-1837) 1955
NO6 Comanche NO6

844 for her to lie down upon. They would be so particular as to sift the earth through the fingers, and detect and take out everything but the soft pulverized earth. Upon this spot she would pass her hour, when she would rise, take up her child, throw a blanket about her, and go to the nearest stream, bathe herself and child, and return to her business the same day, as though nothing had happened!—and it was the same thing whether she was at home, or pursuing a journey. Some of my readers may think the above too great a tax upon their credulity; but I can assure them, upon the veracity of one who has been a witness in several instances, that such is the fact.

841 In the case of catamenia, the woman instantly leaves her tent, and, as far as possible, seeks a place of concealment from her husband and family; she declines all company, especially of men, nor will she speak to one if she can avoid it. Should there be any article of her neighbor's within her tent at the time of her leaving it, it is thrown out upon the ground, and there it remains until they leave that place for some other, when the owner picks it up; but on no occasion will her family bring anything from abroad into her tent while she is absent. If the family with whom she stays are under the necessity of borrowing any article while she is with them, it is washed with the utmost care, when it is brought in, and when it is to be sent home. She remains in her [*60*] retreat four days, during

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31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
Oklahoma

The tabus which are attached to supernatural power are a major reason that a doctor may experience difficulty in his attempt to find a successor. Wallace and Hoebel (1952:165) mention this in their discussion of Comanche supernaturalism:

> Such reluctance to assume power, or particular powers, was common among the Comanches. Powers were always accompanied by tabus; tabus were onerous restrictions on the freedom of action that a Comanche male cherished. The result was an ambivalent attitude toward the possession of Medicine.

Sanapia, being aware of this, is planning to delete certain tabus from her Medicine way in order to make the acquisition of her powers more palatable to a twentieth-century Comanche. Of course, the absence of certain tabus also indicates the absence of the concomitant degree of power. Her successor will not be burdened with the food and eating tabus which Sanapia finds so cumbersome. He will also not have to be bothered with the tabu forbidding the making of direct requests. These deletions are major concessions for Sanapia, but ones which she feels are necessary if her tradition is to continue.

Sanapia's mother modified her Medicine way before transmitting it to Sanapia for much the same reasons that Sanapia is now being compelled to consider. An element which occurred in her mother's modifications, though not in Sanapia's, was the deletion of certain powers because of their lack of contemporary function. Her mother possessed many medicines and songs which were associated with the role of midwife. She told Sanapia that the delivering of infants would be taken over by white doctors in the future and, therefore, there was no reason for Sanapia to learn the skill or to be compelled to observe the tabus associated with it. To both Sanapia and her mother the primary function of an eagle doctor is his ability to cure ghost sickness[2]. The deletions in tabus and power made by Sanapia and her mother have not infringed on this specific power.

Sanapia believes that her doctoring tradition will ultimately die as the Comanches become more acculturated. She states that *puhakuts* will cease to exist when the Comanches have no more need for them. Sanapia's sensitivity, concern with function, and general pragmatic instincts make her a very sensitive barometer of the manner in which culture change is viewed and handled by a traditionally oriented Comanche. Since her opinion of herself is bound by supernatural sanctions, and not merely by elusive value structure, her reaction to culture change is much more dramatic.

Attitudes about Sanapia

The ways in which Comanches of both northern and southern affiliation and members of neighboring tribes react to Sanapia as a personality are many and

[2] "Ghost sickness," "twisted face," and "crooked mouth" are names which the Comanches, as well as other southern Plains tribes, give to a condition of facial hemiplegia, usually with concomitantly occurring constrictions of the hands and arms, which is said to result from ghost contact.

31: Jones · E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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278 824 too. Put it in their bodies and mix it up so they can stick it on these rocks like you can see. That's why this medicine works best with cedar.

237 755 757 Rock medicine is only used in conjunction with cedar. Both are deposited on live coals to produce medicine smoke. The *tɔpinatɨu* sputters when placed on the coals and produces a thick white smoke which is not unlike cedar smoke in [754] odor, though more pungent. This medicine's major use is in the treatment of ghost sickness and the results of witchcraft.

Sanapia picks the tiny pebbles and grains of sand from the *tɔpinatɨu* and forms the then-translucent amber-colored gum into a ball about an inch in diameter. She rolls the ball between her palms and the heat and friction polish it to a glassy brown-gold color. It is in this form that it is utilized as medicine.

There is a medicine similar in kind to *tɔpinatɨu* which Sanapia reports is found in the vicinity of Wichita Falls, Texas. The Comanche word for it, according to Sanapia, means "rats make it." It is described as being of the same composition as *tɔpinatɨu*; however, instead of being produced by "little bugs," it is believed to be produced by pack rats. The gummy substance is melted in hot water, and persons suffering from paralysis, other than the kind caused by ghosts, are bathed in this concoction. This medicine, unmelted, is also applied directly to the area of paralysis. Sanapia remembers that her mother used this medicine; however, it was not transferred to Sanapia when she became a doctor.

278 824 755 757 [844] [303] Another medicine plant of which Sanapia has knowledge, but which was not transmitted by her mother to her, is one which, when mixed *bekwinatɨu*, was administered as a sedative to women in protracted labor. The seeds of this plant were utilized as medicine when boiled into a medicinal decoction. Sanapia also states that the seeds of this plant augment the attractive aroma of Indian perfume (*Monarda fisulosa*) when the two are mixed and moistened.

I can just sit here and look at them bald prairies and see four kinds of medicines growing. I bet you can't even see them? Not many . . . even of my people, up to today, can even see them growing early in the spring. I can because I've learned that way. There's lots of plants that can get you well, but they ain't many people who even know that anymore.

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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578 754 561 rationale for witchcraft, especially between males, in the nomadic Comanche culture. In a society which emphasized physical prowess, the old and enfeebled were at a definite disadvantage. The older men could not join the younger in the 754 prestigeful activities of war, sexual adventuring, and hunting, and they were 561 therefore forced to turn to magic and supernatural means if they desired to con- 554 tinue their futile attempts to compete for social power and prestige with the 558 younger men of the tribe. Since Comanche culture was not oriented to allow an 578 individual to acquire prestige and position through material acquisition alone, this avenue was also denied the older men.

Factors in the Decline of Witchcraft

754 178 561 556 578 Perhaps a factor contributing to the lessening incidences of witchcraft, noted by Sanapia even in her own time, can be attributed to the fact that in the postreservation period the older men of the tribe were able to acquire a certain economic power through such channels as land allotments and welfare, while at the same time the younger men were being denied their main traditional avenue to prestige—war. Thus a more tolerable balance developed between the prestige and social power levels of the young and the old. The woman, whose social position rose and fell with the male to whom she was attached, also acquired the benefits of this postreservation phenomenon. A woman could own land like a male, and with older women this became an attraction to the younger men, men perhaps born too late to take full advantage of the land allotments. Therefore, an older and economically more powerful woman could more successfuly compete with a younger woman for available males.

754 178 561 844 578 However, neither economic power nor supernatural methods can cause a woman to produce offspring after she has reached a certain advanced age. In a moment of anger or spite, a young Comanche woman's invectives directed toward an old woman will inevitably include a caustic reminder to the older woman of her "uselessness" as a woman. Sanapia and many of my female Comanche informants mentioned the porential dangers which a young woman exposes herself and her children to when she flaunts her offspring in front of an older woman whose children have left her. This, in Sanapia's opinion, is the reason for the high degree of witched infants and why Sanapia immediately accuses an old woman for the act of witchcraft.

754 178 571 361 Several other factors can be suggested as relevant to the decline of Comanche witchcraft. With the allotment of lands the various family units within the same band became more isloated and thus any possibility of an act which could motivate an individual to operate witchcraft against another member of that band became lessened as relatively forced social proximity, as was the case in the reservation period, became lessened among band members.

754 178 887 888 As the band's economic function was destroyed, the individual family units were compelled to become more independent. Thus, the older members of the Comanche extended families were necessarily allotted tasks as more jobs had to be handled by a smaller number of individuals. In this manner the older people